7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

the Zulu, Swazi and other tribes with the regiment system. The *icalo* is also a ritual unit. At each capital are the sacred relics (*babenye*) of the first holders of the chiefly title and their ancestral spirits are thought to act as tutelary deities of the district, and are worshipped at the *umusumba*, at village shrines, and old hut sites throughout the country, and are also commonly supposed to act as guardian spirits to children born within the *icalo*.[1] Naturally the ritual and political organization of the paramount's capital is more elaborate than that of his inferiors, but even the smallest sub-chief maintains his miniature court and tries to ape the state of those above him, while the bigger territorial chiefs sometimes rivalled the power of the Citimukulu in the old days.

The territorial chieftainships are arranged in order of precedence, according to their nearness to the centre of the country—Lubemba—and the antiquity of their office. To the most important of these chiefdoms—the Mwambaship, the Nkulaship, the Nkolemfumuship, and the Mpepoship, for instances—the Citimukulu appoints his nearest relatives, the one succeeding the other in order of seniority. Thus the present Citimukulu, Kanyanta, has acted in turn as the Nkolemfumu, and the Mwamba before succeeding to the paramountcy (cf. chart on p. 102). On the other hand, the sub-chieftainships have tended to become concentrated in local branches of the royal family, and the paramount's strong grip over the country and his intimate knowledge of affairs at the courts of his fellow chiefs is certainly weaker in these outlying districts than in the case of chiefdoms ruled by his close relatives.

To the commoner, membership of an *icalo* means his allegiance to the chief of that territory. He will describe himself as an inhabitant of a district, such as *Icinga*, i.e. *mwine Icinga* or, alternatively, as the subject of its chief, Nkula, i.e. *mwine Nkula*, and both terms are synonymous. He may move from village to village within the *icalo*, but he remains his chief's man. The latter, in his turn, reckons his assets, not in terms of the size of his territory or its natural resources, but rather by the number of his people and in particular the villages he has under his rule.

(3) *Rank*. Rank is a marked feature of Bemba society. It is based on kinship, real or fictitious, with the chief. All members of the royal crocodile clan (*Bena ŋandu*) are entitled to special respect, precedence on ritual and social occasions, and sometimes

[1] Hence the great preponderance of one or two birth-names in each district.

7:Richards E-5 (1930-1934)1940 FQ5 Bemba FQ5

exactly,[1] but they were used in the main as executive officials and shorn of most of their authority and their privileges, such as the owning of slaves, the possession of arms, the right of mutilation, the power of administering the poison test, and the collection of the ivory tusks.

The sanctions for the power of the new administration were, in native eyes I think, its military strength and the fact that it had overcome the once powerful Bemba chiefs, and later, as new economic values were acquired, its apparently endless wealth.[2] But when talking with elder natives one is aware how largely the pattern of fear and personal allegiance accorded to the old chiefs was transferred with little modification to the new authorities. The same terms are used for both: there is the same assumption that the tax, game-laws, and even the paid employment of natives are all dues demanded by the Government for its own aggrandisement, as was the tribute of the chiefs in the old days.[3] There is much the same belief in the ruler's complete omnipotence, and a similar expectation of sudden arbitrary action, even as I noticed, when the most good-natured and reasonable officials appeared to be concerned. It is no exaggeration to state that each Government station is in effect a native capital or *umusumba*. Each has its district officer, an authority like the chief with a following to whom allegiance may mean advance, and who is regarded with mingled fear and loyalty. Each has its force of messengers and police, employs its own labour.

The missionary bodies in the country must also be regarded as new authorities set up in the tribe. The White Fathers entered the Bemba country just ahead of the B.S.A. administration and set up their first post near Kasama, in the heart of the Bemba country. They can still be said to dominate this central district, although the Church of Scotland Mission and the London Missionary Society also operate elsewhere. Each different mission station must also be regarded as an *umusumba*. Many

[1] cf. Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the financial and economic position of Northern Rhodesia (1938), p. 179.

[2] Older natives seemed to me to comment most on the ferocity of the Government officials (*ubukali*), and the younger to speak of the wealth of the Administration.

[3] It is common for old men and women to refer to their sons who have either been recruited or else gone voluntarily to the mines as having been 'seized by the Government', and to speak of opportunities arranged for the sale of their grain as having their food 'seized' by the native commissioner.